

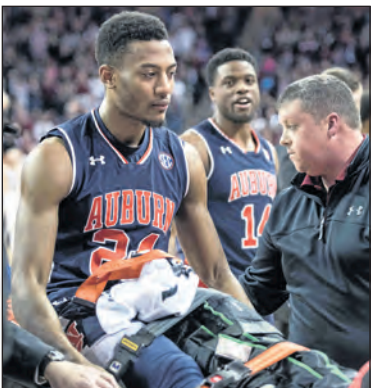
OPELIKA-AUBURN NEWS

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**Auburn
starter
suffers
gruesome
injury in
tough
loss — 1B**



**There are several reasons
evangelicals like Pence — 4A**

“We do have a protocol in place for active shooters. We practice that now, as you practice fire safety and weather safety drills. There are drills for active shooters. That’s just the world we live in now, unfortunately.”

— Mac McCoy, Lee County Schools superintendent

Emergency preparedness



EMILY ENFINGER/EENFINGER@OANOW.COM

Lee County Sheriff’s Deputy Heather Norred poses for a photo inside a hallway at Samford Middle School in Lee County, where she is the law enforcement officer assigned to the middle school.

Local schools train for the unthinkable

BY CARLA NELSON
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One of the deadliest school shootings in American history occurred Wednesday when 19-year-old Nikolas Cruz shot and killed 17 students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla.

Afterward, parents across the country are voicing more concern for their children’s safety at school. From conducting

INSIDE

Angry and grieving Broward County, Fla., residents take gun protest to streets. **5A**

active-shooter drills to installing security cameras, Lee County, Opelika and Auburn schools systems say they are as prepared as possible for such an event.

“Each and every member of the Auburn City Schools team is dedicated to

providing the safe school environment our students deserve, and in the wake of last week’s tragedy, we hold the community of Parkland, Fla., extremely close to our hearts,” Auburn City Schools Superintendent Karen DeLano said.



DeLano

See **SCHOOLS**, Page 3A



KEITH HUFFMAN / KHUFFMAN@OANOW.COM

Brandon Clearman, who works at the Opelika Utilities water treatment plant, samples the “finished” product that is distributed to the city.

Opelika Utilities seeks cost-effective water treatments

BY KEITH HUFFMAN
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They have absolutely no interest in it happening again.

Crew members have sampled water and searched for any lingering taste and odor issues throughout the city, and officials with Opelika Utilities are evaluating cost-effective-treatment options to help minimize these effects in the future.

“Ourselves and our consulting engineers are evaluating treatment techniques that are being used in our industry to combat taste and odor issues,” said Dan Hilyer, general manager of Opelika Utilities. “And part of that evaluation is, ‘Will it be effective on our water?’ because every water is different, and not every treatment technique will work on every water system.

“And for each one of those that we evaluate, we’re also doing a cost-benefit comparison to see which one of them is the most cost-effective.”

Seeking a treatment

Particularly, officials are looking into “pre-treatment” and “finished water” techniques, Hilyer said.

“Pre-treatment would be we’re treating the water as it comes directly out of the lake,” he explained. “Finished water is we’re treating it after it goes through the filters.”

No plausible cost range is available yet because officials are in the early stages of evaluating options, Hilyer said. In the meantime, the Opelika Utilities Board is awaiting officials’ findings.

“The board is going to listen to the recommendations of the staff and the consulting engineers and make a decision,” said Jeff Hilyer (no relation), chairman of

See **WATER**, Page 9A

Smiths Station works to preserve historic store as a local museum

BY KARA COLEMAN
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Smiths Station Mayor F.L. “Bubba” Copeland stood in the building that once housed the historic Jones Store and pointed to the floor.

“This is the original floor, from probably 1887, shortly after the Civil War,” he said. “We’re bringing everything up to restore this back to its original luster.”

He pointed to a spot against one wall, where a patch of the wood floor was painted red.

“The original color is over there. It

was kind of a brick red. That’s what every one of them is going to be, to match that, when we’re all done.”

A community centerpiece

The city was gifted the 523-square-foot, cabin-like store by someone who bought the property where the building previously stood. Copeland and other city officials have spent the past year slowly working to refurbish the Jones Store, with the goal of turning it into a local-history museum.

See **MUSEUM**, Page 8A



Smiths Station Mayor F.L. “Bubba” Copeland talks about the history of the old Smiths Station store.

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Weather

High: 65 Low: 58
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Mostly cloudy
with a passing shower

East Alabama Home & Garden Show

March 24 • 9am-1pm • Bottling Plant Event Center

Admission \$1 donation to Newspapers in Education or one canned good
Brought to you by The Opelika-Auburn News & The Home Depot

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